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THE LOUVAIN AMERICAN COLLEGE.

The name of the city of Louvain was heralded throughout the world by the Great War more than it ever was through its five-century old university. It became famous overnight by one of these deeds of which the memory perdures down the centuries to shame humanity for its own perverseness. That deed, the sack of the city and the utter annihilation of the University Library with its wealth of incunabula, manuscripts, busts, paintings, architectural and sculptural treasures, revolted the civilized nations of the earth; and in the United States, we are told, the shock the first tidings caused, was heightened by fears for another institution connected with the University, part and parcel of it, yet a cairn abroad of the land of Stars and Stripes. That institution was the College of the Immaculate Conception, a theological and philosophical school for future laborers in the Lord's vineyard of the New World. Had it been destroyed? Had it escaped the general havoc? These questions repeated by hundreds of its well-wishers, were echoed and re-echoed from Atlantic to Pacific, from the Lakes to the Gulf. The answer happily was, that it escaped the general conflagration; and thus it came to pass that millions who did not know before, now know that in the wantonly burned city there is a home, American in name, American in origin, American in scope and purpose, American in all its being and existence—America and Catholic. It belongs to the Church and it belongs to America and therefore, though thousands of miles away from the land which lays just claim upon it, it occupies its own peculiar place in that land's history, particularly in its Church History. As the aim of *The Catholic Historical Review* is to collect material for the History of the American Catholic Church, yea, to write that history for the edification of present and future generations, an account of that Louvain American home dedicated to the glorious Patroness of the Church in the United States, to Mary Immaculate, of its birth in 1857 and its continued existence ever since belongs to the field which the Editors of the *Review* have chosen to cultivate.

What caused this college to be founded and why was it located in Louvain?

The pressing need in the United States of more priests to attend to the immigrants that flocked thither in larger numbers than before in the early fifties; the particularly favorable situation of Belgium at the cross-roads of Northern European nations; the thorough Catholic spirit of the Belgian people; their missionary enterprise, which since the day when St. Francis Xavier wrote, *Da mihi Belgas*, had in no wise diminished; the opportunity offered at Louvain to train young men at the least possible expense to the then poor and struggling American Bishops; and finally, the special facilities proffered to learn the languages spoken by the immigrant and native born.

Belgians had distinguished themselves as missionaries in America ere the American College was thought of and even before the United States had developed into a nation. A Belgian, Father Louis Hennepin, (1640-

1701) was one of the early explorers of the North West; another Belgian, Leo de Neckere had been Bishop of New Orleans (1829-1833); the second Bishop of Chicago, James Van de Velde, (1849-1853) was a Belgian; so was Peter Paul Lefevre, Coadjutor Bishop and Administrator of Detroit (1841-1869). Father Charles Nerinckx (1761-1824) had been one of the early apostles of the Church in Kentucky, founding the now widely-spread and devoted Sisters of Loretto at the Foot of the Cross; Charles De La Croix (1792-1869) laid the foundation of the Church in Missouri, preparing the way there for the first Jesuits who located in the State, nine in number, all Belgians. To the band belonged the famous Indian pacifier Pierre Jean De Smet (1801-1873). These and numerous others had raised Belgian missionaries to so high a pinnacle of fame that the memory of them prompted American Bishops to make frequent journeys to the little land to recruit more candidates for their dioceses. The journeys contributed to foster the desire for a nursery of priests in the land itself, the more so that there were men there devoted to the interests of God's Church who manifested a practical readiness to meet the desires of the American Prelates more than half way. And so it happened that when the illustrious Martin J. Spalding, then Bishop of Louisville, Kentucky, visited Belgium in 1852, the project of founding a seminary for American missions at Louvain had sufficiently matured to enter into the domain of probable early realization. The churchman who at that time occupied the archiepiscopal seat of Malines so enthused his American brother in the episcopacy over the feasibility of the pious dream, that he wrote from Belgium to Archbishop Kenrick of Baltimore: "The ecclesiastical spirit here is admirable, and the simple piety of the people contrasts strongly with the comparative coldness of Catholics in Protestant countries. A hundred young men, educated at Louvain for the American missions! Is not the thought enlivening? And yet, it is very far from impossible; and if the Cardinal's anticipations be well grounded, it may be done with little or no expense to the American Prelates."

However, concomitant with the desire for a College in Belgium there was the quite natural desire to have one in Rome, the center of Catholicity, and the majority of American churchmen no doubt shared the view of Bishop Neumann of Philadelphia, who wrote that "personally he would be in favor of an American College in Rome," although he added: "If I am to remain in Philadelphia....I will certainly take an active part in the projected American College at Louvain. The high reputation for learning and discipline in Belgium is too well known as to allow me to hesitate a moment."¹

De facto a Belgian priest, vicar-general of the Bishop of Detroit, was sent to Rome by the Bishops to see about opening a College there. But the times were most unpropitious; for the city being occupied by the French Army, it was not possible to procure appropriate quarters, as the Holy

¹ Letter to Bishop Lefevre, facsimile in *Ecclesiastical Review*, Philadelphia. Vol. XXXIII, p. 182.

Father was most reluctantly obliged to declare to the envoy of the Bishops.

Disappointed, Father Kindekens set his face towards his native land and was there consoled for his failure at Rome upon ascertaining that the project of a seminary for foreign missions had lost none of its charms with those whose conversations on the subject had so much enthused Bishop Spalding four years previously. There was no hesitating about taking advantage of these dispositions. In doing so, he secured the promise of a donation of fifty thousand francs from the Count de Mèrode and of the good will of the Catholic press, which agreed to promote a subscription in aid of the undertaking as soon as he could provide the assurance that the Bishops of the United States approved of it. He was no sooner back in America than he acquainted the episcopal body by letter with his failure in Rome and his success in Belgium, pleading at the same time for the Belgian project to be carried out in Louvain. The Bishops concurred in Father Kindeken's views; but only those of Detroit and Louisville showed any disposition to afford pecuniary assistance. They felt thereby entitled to assume the initiative of charging the negotiator just returned from Belgium and Rome with the task of founding the American missionary institution at Louvain.

Father Kindekens departed again for Europe in February 1857, in a light mood no doubt, because of the promises made him by the Count de Mèrode, the newspaper editors and the Belgian Bishops. Sore was his disappointment when he reached his destination and learned that the Count de Mèrode had in the meantime died without leaving instructions about the execution of the promise made. The too great caution of Mgr. de Ram, Rector of the Louvain University, may have had something to do with this omission. We are led to draw that inference from a letter, hitherto unpublished, which he wrote to his niece Mme. Mast.

"J'ai eu lundi la visite de Monseigneur de Mèrode...² Je dois le revoir vendredi à Bruxelles ou j'ai à traiter avec son père l'affaire de l'établissement d'un Collège Américain à Louvain. Le Comte Félix est disposé à acheter la maison, mais je devrai lui conseiller de ne pas se lier trop, car les Evêques de l'Amérique du Nord, au moins le grand nombre, sont fort entreprenants, mais ils ne calculent pas toujours bien. Commencer c'est facile; mais consolider et perfectionner, c'est autre chose."

"I had the visit last Monday of Monsignor de Mèrode... I must see him again about the establishment of an American College at Louvain. Count Felix de Mèrode is inclined to buy the house; but I shall have to advise him not to bind himself overmuch, for the Bishops of North America, at least most of them are very enterprising, but they do not always calculate well. To begin is an easy matter enough; but to consolidate and to perfect, that's quite a different proposition."

The loss of the fifty thousand francs was a serious obstacle to the suc-

² Monsignor de Mèrode was an ex-army officer who became Pope Pius IX's Minister of War.

³ Mgr. de Ram to his niece Mme. Mast, Nov. 19, 1856.

cess of Father Kindekens's mission; but, as he had the plow in the furrow, the stubbornness of the glebe was not going to make him lose his grip of the handle. He would have his college without help from the Count de Mèrode's purse. Only, now that the golden rim of his dreams had vanished into air, he looked about the less pretentious quarters of Louvain for a house on a par with his depreciated stock. His lone wanderings brought him to a corner butcher-shop with the fatidic sign, "Te Huren" (To Let). He hastened to find out the owner and, instead of renting, bought the place, "*Au compte de la Providence*," as he wrote to the Directors of the Propagation of the Faith in an appeal for funds. The purchase price was thirteen thousand francs. The building turned out to be part of an old college founded by the Benedictines of the Abbey of Aulne in the year 1629, and like so many other religious institutions disbanded at the French Revolution.

In the Feast of St. Joseph, March 19, 1857, The American College of the Immaculate Conception was declared opened for the reception of candidates; but the first to present himself did not enter until June 4th following. He was J. B. Van de Mergel, a priest of the Diocese of Ghent, who a year later, April 1858, with three of his companions, departed for the States. He cast his lot with the Diocese of Louisville, where he earned for himself the title of Apostle of Grayson Co. Because of the Mission's extreme poverty, no priest had ever been able to hold out there before him; he held out, because as his bishop put it: "He lived on nothing and cooked it himself."

The cosmopolitan character which the College was ever afterwards to retain, was well defined within the first months of existence. At the second opening of the scholastic year, Oct. 1858, five countries were represented among the twelve students upon the roll-call: America, Belgium, Germany, Ireland and the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg. The first American student was David Russell, a Kentuckian; the first German, William Schupmann; the first Luxemburger, August B. Durst; the first Irishman, William Wiseman. The latter was also the first to take a degree at the University, the first to be ordained to the priesthood from the College, namely for the Diocese of Louisville. He became the founder and editor of *The Pastor*, the first review for priests published in the English language in the United States.

The diversity of nationality in the same house presented some dangers which the Rector applied himself to forestall by emphasizing, in his talks to the students, the duty for each and every one to put aside all inclination to exclusiveness. The students understood and one of them translated their Rector's sound advice into the pithy sentence MISSIONARI PATRIA, CHRISTI DEI ECCLESA. Another student, handy with the brush, took care to keep the motto in everybody's mind by lettering it in colors upon the walls of the room that served as refectory and recreation hall. The spirit expressed by the phrase, jealously preserved by succeeding generations, fostered peace, concord and happiness, and contributed much to maintain throughout the years the bonds that unite the alumni of

the Louvain College with one another and with their Alma Mater. It prompted the Editor of *The Ecclesiastical Review* to write but lately: "The American College in Louvain has always been able to keep the affection of its alumni in a marked degree."

The inspirer of the spirit and its instiller into the student's hearts, Father Kindekens, would have deserved well of the institution if he had done nothing else. He did much more, yet in his own mind, he felt disappointed, because all his expectations were not realizing. He, therefore, owned himself relieved of a heavy burden, when in the beginning of his third year of rectorship, he was given a successor at the head of an institution about whose future he was full of misgivings, in the person of Father John De Nève, pastor of Niles, Michigan, and like himself by birth a Belgian.

The new Rector arrived in December 1859. He was young, energetic, possessed of shrewd business acumen and unhampered by any feeling of past disappointments. He had been but three years out of his native land, where his friends were staunch and numerous by reason, especially, of nine years of previous ministry in the Ghent diocese. He aroused the confidence of all with whom he came into contact—of the Bishops, who were showing themselves somewhat loath in allowing young candidates for the priesthood to go to the American missions, of the generous-minded people, whose purse-strings Father Kindekens had not succeeded in loosening, of the citizens of Louvain, who believed him freighted with heavy pouches of California gold. Thus it came to pass, that with moneys brought, not from America, but collected in Belgium, he was enabled to purchase houses adjoining the original quarters, and to remodel the latter. His was the conviction that the College must rely upon European resources; that the Bishops in the States had more than they could do to organize their respective dioceses; that Belgium could well afford to detract some of its men and means for the struggling missions abroad. It was quite natural, therefore, that he should bend his attention to elicit sympathies, first of all in Belgium, and the good will, moreover, of existing missionary societies in Germany, France and Austria. His power of persuasion was irresistible. Gifts poured in from all sides—from a generous and wealthy Bruges priest, Canon C. J. Maes; from the *Leopoldinen Stiftung* of Vienna, and the Bavarian *Ludwig Verein*, and from the Society of the Propagation of the Faith of Paris. He drew to his side Canon J. Van de Kerckhove and Father Florimond De Bruycker. The former became an unsalaried professor of Holy Scriptures and enriched the institution with many precious gifts during the fifty subsequent years of his life; and the latter, whose benefactions stretched over a period of forty years, became his vice-rector. He attached to the house several other Belgians blessed with a wealth of this world's goods and with a still greater wealth of generosity. Mgr. De Nève was their instigator and the feelings with which he actuated them, not only raised the edifice but supported it for

⁴ *Ecclesiastical Review*, Sept. 1920, p. 321

years. Thanks mainly to the support of these his Belgian friends, he gave the College its standing, enlarged its holdings, and sent every year increasing numbers of priests to the missions, at a minimum of cost to the Bishops. These priests turned out to be such a credit to him, that several Bishops directed the best of their candidates to be trained to the priesthood by the grand guide, as the former pastor of Niles, Michigan, proved to be. So Louvain became the mother of the sacerdotal life of the future founder of Peoria diocese, of John L. Spalding, the author of the College Song "The Church of God, the Christian's Home," which the students sing at all their festive gatherings; of Patrick W. Riordan, who died Archbishop of San Francisco; of his brother Daniel, Monsignor Riordan, of St. Elisabeth Church, Chicago; and of many others, who played a conspicuous part in perfecting the Church edifice in the United States.

In May 1861, the Rector was pleased to learn that the Fathers of the III Council of Cincinnati had embodied in the pastoral letter which they issued upon the occasion words of commendation for the Louvain Americanum.

"We also take much pleasure in thanking our Venerable Brothers the Cardinal Archbishop and the Bishops of Catholic Belgium, for the truly Christian and noble zeal which has prompted them to lend their aid to the establishment of the American College of the Immaculate Conception of Louvain, the seat of the ancient and illustrious Catholic University which has shed so much lustre on the Catholic Church."

In January 1862, there came to the College, again from the Michigan mission, the Rev. Dumont, who after acting as vice-rector and professor of dogma for eleven years, was chosen to take a seat among the Belgian Episcopate as Bishop of Tournai. He was a man of wealth, and of a largeness of heart which helped the Rector out of many a pinch and was a blessing for the alumni at work on the poorer missions of the West.

There were no missionary annals in Belgium in those days. It led the Rector, who could not meet all the demands of laborers that came to him from all sections of the States, to have frequent recourse to the secular press in Belgium itself and also in Germany and Holland. It published his letters, extracts from the letters of the Bishops and letters from the alumni on the mission which he communicated to it to make known his house and to draw vocations towards it.

Among the letters made public, there were some from an uncle of Cardinal Mercier who had gone to the Far West and who, in after years, became known as "The Saint of Oregon," setting during a ministry of forty years among the Indians a most exalted example of zeal, disinterestedness and piety.⁵

During the early sixties the existence of the College was also frequently heralded throughout Belgium by notices in the press of the visits of American Bishops in quest of subjects for their dioceses and, in the case of Archbishop McCloskey, of New York, and of Bishop Fitzpatrick, of

⁵ *American College Bulletin of Louvain*: Vols. III, IV, V.

Boston, to secure the Rector's good offices for the foundation of a seminary in the States manned with professors from Belgium. As a result of the negotiations, mostly carried on by Mgr. De Nève, the Seminary of Troy came into being. It was for a long time the purveyor of priests for all the New England States, for Delaware, New Jersey and New York. May it not be called, by reason of the share that the large-hearted Monsignor de Nève had in its erection, a daughter of the Louvain Americanum?

The College had been tested and been found true to the test; but it still wanted the supreme approval and blessing of the Vice-Gerent of Christ upon earth. Father De Nève felt that he had credentials in plenty in the report of its work to entitle him to pray for that approval. To make sure of it, he journeyed to Rome in 1868 and, having been admitted to the august presence of the Holy Father for a private audience, he was pleased to hear from his lips: "We both founded an American College, but you succeeded better than I did." He referred to the American College at Rome, on which our Louvain College had an advance of two years and a half. Like all God's works it had had its trials, mostly at the start: they were the forerunners of the transcending blessings and success it later enjoyed to the full.

The great trials of the Louvain institution did not come until it had seen a dozen years of steady progress under the masterful leadership of Father De Nève, who had become Monsignor de Nève at the request of the American Bishops assembled in Rome for the Ecumenical Council. When his charge was giving the full measure of its usefulness, he, who was the head and the soul of it, by one of these blows with which Divine Providence often tries our faith, became mentally unbalanced and incapable to continue a work that was what it was through him. He was temporarily replaced by Father Dumont, who, two years later, in 1873, became Bishop of Tournai. Then Father Pulsers assumed the rectoral burdens. He had been in the house since 1865 and, previously to that time had been professor of philosophy at the diocesan seminary of Bois-le-Duc and a missionary in Michigan. He was no less a disinterested priest than his colleagues Dumont and Van Kerckhove; for like they, not only did he give his time and his talents to the cause without remuneration, but helped to sustain it out of his own inherited fortune. He remained at the helm until the year 1881, keeping up Father De Nève's traditions in sending good and faithful priests to America, as is evidenced from the fact that four pupils of those years were raised to the episcopal dignity—The Rt. Reverend J. J. O'Connor, Bishop of Newark and the Rt. Revs. J. J. Fox, J. N. Lemmens and Wm. Stang, deceased bishops, respectively of the dioceses of Green Bay, Vancouver Island and Fall River.

At the close of ten years of sickness and convalescence, Mgr. De Nève, feeling his old self again, traveled to Rome and to the States and after consultation with the Cardinal Simeoni, Prefect of the Propaganda, and with several of the Bishops patrons of the College—there were fifteen at the same time who had acquired this title by the bestowal of a sum of one thousand dollars—he resumed the rectorship. Father Pulsers, modestly

resigning his charge, was content to keep his class of Canon Law, which he had taught since his first arrival into the house.

Shortly after his return, Monsignor De Nève had the happiness to preside at the institution's silver jubilee of existence. The feast took place March 19, 1882. It was the occasion of warm marks of sympathy for the Rector and Professors from the alumni, who were practically scattered throughout all the dioceses of the United States and even then counted among their numbers one archbishop and five bishops, namely: Archbishop Charles J. Seghers, of Oregon City, and Bishops John L. Spalling, of Peoria, John B. Brondel, of Vancouver Island, Aegidius Juenger, of Nesqually (now Seattle) and Francis Janssens of Natchez.

Two years later the Council of Baltimore particularly commended the College to the attention of the Bishops of the United States and selected three graduates of Louvain, whom they entrusted with its supervision and charged particularly to represent the Prelates, patrons of the institution. They were the Rt. Revs. F. Janssens, J. L. Spalding and C. J. Maes. Upon the death, in 1897, of the Board's first president, who had in the mean time become Archbishop of New Orleans, the Most Rev. P. Riordan, of San Francisco, became the third member and the Rt. Rev. Bishop Maes of Covington, was chosen as its chairman. At the conclusion of the War not one of these was alive, and a new board was constituted with Bishop O'Connor of Newark as President and Bishops T. Meerschaert and E. Dunne as his co-members. The Board receives yearly from the Rector a report on the financial standing of the house, on the number of students and their work. To it belongs the presentation of candidates for the Rectorship, and it has a veto-power in the selection by the Rector, of the Vice-Rector and of the professors. Its authoritative approval is required for the making of loans and for extraordinary expenditures. In a word, the College is governed by the three Bishops through the Rector chosen by them.

One of the results of the celebration of the Silver Jubilee was to bring home to the alumni that the time had come for them to take a practical interest in the maintenance and the future development of their alma mater; that they must relieve the Rector of part of the burden of finding means to meet the ever-increasing needs, and allow Belgian benefactors to turn their benefactions into other channels. Archbishop Riordan, then still pastor of St. James' Church, Chicago, was the man who called his fellow-alumni's attention to that duty. The result was a modest purse of 10,000 francs presented to the Rector as an earnest of the former pupil's good will. It was the gift of missionaries almost all poor and struggling, but a gift of which the worth was increased by the warmth of love and gratitude with which it was bestowed. From that time on Lovanists were prompt in assuming their share of the liabilities for all the improvements made at their college-home; in fact their participation in its further material extension increased gradually so much, that to-day it may be called *their* seminary also in the sense that it is they who practically finance it.

The first gift from the alumni to cross the ocean for Louvain served to inaugurate the building era of the College. Up to 1888 it had been but a

jumble of old houses more or less adroitly fitted up into a seminary. In that year some ramshackle buillings on the south-side were torn down and in their place there arose a three-story structure of modern Flemish architecture. It was the crowning work of Mgr. De Nève's rectorship. Shortly after it was finished, he was taken sick again and resigned his charge, which fell upon the shoulders of his devoted co-worker, Father J. Willemsen, who had been professor at the institution since the year 1872. His selection for the first place was a fitting reward and a natural consequence of his dutiful and exemplary filling of the second, as his elevation to a prelacy shortly after was the seal of approval placed upon the noble efforts he displayed to keep the College sailing upon the high tide of success. He it was who undertook in 1892 the construction of the Chapel, a Gothic edifice, polychromed, with stained-glass windows and five altars, of which the sculptured main-altar massive and artistic, is a gift of a sister of the former Rector, and Bishop of Tournai, Mgr. E. Dumont.

Another monument of the devoted Mgr. Willemsen's rectorate were the Rules, which, but for some changes made in 1907, still govern the institution. He framed them upon the express desire of the Propaganda, by which they were approved July 3d, 1895. From Cardinal Simeoni, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation they received the high encomium: "They are admirable."

In 1895 a structure containing kitchen, students' dining-room and vice-rectoral quarters was erected; and ten years later Dr. J. de Becker, who entered the College in 1885 as professor of Canon Law and Liturgy and succeeded Mgr. Willemsen in 1898 as Rector, undertook a task that was to transform that College,—the Professors' quarters excepted—in its entirety, doing away with the last vestige of the original house bought by Father Kindekens in 1857. He put up a T-shaped four-and-half-story edifice that raises the apex of its stepped gable-roofs eighty-two feet above street level, commanding all but the church steeples of old Louvain.

The last improvements of note were begun in 1913 by Mgr. de Becker: they transformed the professors and guests quarters, enlarged and beautified the kitchen and the students' refectory, removed and changed the main entrance, and put the whole plant into the shape which it is likely to retain until such times as it will cease to be of use for its present purpose, and the American Bishops decided that it may be dispensed with. Meanwhile all friends who stop before its arched Lous XVI doorway will continue to make theirs the pious wish and prayer chiseled in granite over the extrados of the arch, on both sides of a white-stone statue of the Virgin—*Collegio Americano suo Benedicat Virgo*. The pithy inscription counts up 1914, the sixtieth anniversary of the proclamation of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, the year of the invasion of Belgium by the German Army and of the destruction of a large portion of the city and of the costliest part of the University.

That invasion put a temporary end to the usefulness of the College as such. During the long-protracted War it had its uses for all that. The first year, six students who were left stranded in the occupied territory

wended their way back to it and, thanks to the Professors' devotion, they were permitted to pursue their studies. Four were ordained at the end of the year 1915. Then, the house was closed to studious youth, but it opened its door for the work of charity of which its Rector, Mgr. De Becker, was the heart and soul since the beginning of the winter 1914-1915. He it was whom the inaugurators of Relief in Louvain put at their head, and as the city is the seat of the *Arrondissement*, the headquarters for the whole political division were necessarily in it, housed in the College, which Monsignor de Becker graciously put at the Committee's disposal. It thus became not only a store-room in which were accumulated blankets, wooden shoes, underwear, cloth and clothing; but also the center of all the offices opened in connection with the work of relief, and the meeting place of the A. C. R. B. men and of their colleagues of the National Committee—the Count Jean de Mèrode, Maréchal de la Cour, Senator de Becker, Count le Limburg Stirum, the Chevalier de Wouters d'Oplinters, etc.

During the last year of the conflict, the auditorium and adjoining space was transformed into a depot for flour, and every week 9000 people received there their weekly allowance of flour and yeast.

Moreover the Chapel, to which the antique statue of Mary Seat of Wisdom had been transferred for safe-keeping from St. Peters church, was all through the War the scene of the ecclesiastical festivities of the University and of the Requiem Masses for departed professors and students victims of the cruel scourge. The last of these celebrations, held June 30th, 1918, was the consecration of the University in communion with the whole of Belgium to the Sacred Heart. Present at these religious functions were only the professors and employees of the University and their families. Students there were none; for in agreement with the three other universities of the land, the Louvain school kept its doors closed, because the place of youth was not in the lecture-room but at the front, to help deliver the land from the invader.

The year following the University was again in full swing and the partly restored collegiate church of St. Peter once more witnessed the solemn religious manifestations of University life.

The College did not reopen its doors until November, 1919, with sixteen students from the diocese of Hartford, two from Newark and six Belgians. The composition of the student-body of the re-opened house after an hiatus of five years, is perhaps a prognostic of what the College is to be in the future—no longer a school for young levites, mostly from European countries, but for American youths desirous to profit by the special advantages afforded by education abroad. It broadens the views, helps to maintain the spirit of true Catholicity and makes the study of foreign languages, customs and institutions, whose knowledge is so useful in the ministry, almost imperative. Moreover, now that vocations are becoming more numerous from year to year in the United States and the need of foreign-born priests is no longer felt, the Louvain College may be useful yet as a seminary for native Americans, who more than ever will have to

apply themselves to take care of the foreigners who flock still to the western land of promise.

Grand is the work done in the past by the Louvain College through its alumni. It sent out 773 priests. Nineteen of these were raised to the episcopal dignity. They are: Archbishops Francis A. Janssens, of New Orleans; Bertram Orth, of Victoria, V. Isl.; Patrick W. Riordon, of San Francisco; John L. Spalding, of Peoria; Chas. Seghers, of Oregon City; Bishops John B. Brondel of Helena; Ed. Dunne of Peoria; John J. Fox, of Green Bay; Ferdinand Brossart, of Covington, Alphonse J. Glorieux, of Boise; Aegidius Jünger, of Nesqually, John J. Lawler, of Lead; John Lemmens, of Victoria, V. Isl.; Camillus P. Maes, of Covington; John G. Murray, Auxiliary of Hartford, Theophile Meerschaert, of Oklahoma, John J. O'Connor, of Newark; William Stang, of Fall River; Augustine Van de Vyver, of Richmond.

Besides, one of our alumni, Dr. Peter Guilday, is a professor at the University of Washington. Eighteen were raised to a prelature.

And how cosmopolitan the College has been!

Of its 773 alumni, 233 hailed from Germany, 164 from the United States, 141 from Belgium, 84 from Holland, 51 from Ireland, 34 from Poland, 27 from Austria, 14 from Luxemburg, 13 from France, 6 from Canada, 2 from Italy, 2 from Denmark, 1 from Switzerland and one from Trinidad. As the ensemble was, so were its pupils individually—cosmopolitan; for whilst in the house, they made it a point, as a rule, to add the knowledge of at least two languages to their mother-tongue, and they worked themselves into the spirit of the people whose language they learned, and thus increased their power to serve souls. May the souls they served and helped to save, obtain for the College, the mother of their sacerdotal life the plentitude of Heavenly blessings, and the grace to fulfil its mission faithfully and well till the task set for it by Divine Providence be fully accomplished!

REV. J. VAN DER HEYDEN,
Louvain.